AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as shown directly below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application

1. (Previously Presented) A method of cementing, comprising the steps of providing a cement composition comprising a hydraulic cement, a set retarder, and a particle-size distribution-adjusting agent; activating the cement composition; placing the cement composition in a subterranean formation; and permitting the cement composition to set therein.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cement composition further comprises water, and wherein the water is fresh water, salt water, brine, sea water, or a mixture thereof.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the water is present in the cement composition in an amount sufficient to form a pumpable slurry.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the water is present in the cement composition in an amount in the range of from about 25% to about 150% by weight of the cement.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the hydraulic cement is a Portland cement, pozzolana cement, gypsum cement, high alumina cement, silica cement, or a high alkalinity cement.

6. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the step of providing a cement composition comprises providing a densified cement composition.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the step of providing a densified cement composition comprises the step of adding high-density particles to the cement composition.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the step of providing a densified cement composition comprises the step of reducing the amount of water in the cement composition.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the cement composition further comprises a yield stress reducing agent.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the set retarder is phosphonic acid or a phosphonic acid derivative.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the phosphonic acid derivative is a sodium salt of phosphonic acid.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the set retarder is present in the cement composition in an amount in the range of from about 0.1% to about 5% by weight of the cement.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of activating the cement composition comprises adding an activator composition to the cement composition.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein the activator composition is added in an amount sufficient to enable the cement composition to achieve a desired compressive strength in a desired thickening time.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the activator composition is added in an amount in the range of from about 0.1 to about 5% by weight of the cement.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the activator composition comprises a mixture of a trialkanolamine and an alkali or alkaline earth metal hydroxide.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the trialkanolamine is selected from the group consisting of triethanolamine, tripropanolamine, and triisopropanolamine.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the alkali or alkaline earth metal hydroxide is selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide and potassium hydroxide.

19. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the trialkanolamine is present in an amount in the range of from about 0.1% to about 50% by weight of the activator composition.

20. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is present in an amount in the range of from about 50% to about 99.9% by weight of the activator composition.

21. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium hydroxide.

22. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the activator composition is added to the cement composition in the form of a solution diluted by water.

23. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the activator composition is added to the cement composition while the cement composition is in storage.

24. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the activator composition is added to the cement composition while the cement composition is being placed in the subterranean formation.

25. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the particle-size distribution-adjusting agent is present in the cement composition in an amount sufficient to adjust the particle-size distribution of the cement composition to a desired range.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the cement composition comprising the particle-size distribution-adjusting agent has a particle-size distribution that is narrower than that of ~~the~~ a cement composition lacking the particle-size distribution-adjusting agent.

27. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the particle-size distribution-adjusting agent is present in the cement composition in an amount in the range of from about 0.01% to about 4% by weight of the cement.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the particle-size distribution-adjusting agent is a compound that affects the particle-size distribution of the cement such that the rheology of the cement composition remains substantially stable.

29. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the particle-size distribution-adjusting agent is a cationic polymer.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29 wherein the cationic polymer is selected from the group consisting of cationic polyacrylamides; cationic hydroxyethyl cellulose; poly(dimethyldiallylammonium chloride); and cationic starches.

31. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cement composition further comprises a surfactant, a dispersant, a salt, mica, a formation conditioning agent, a fixed-density weighting agent, vitrified shale, fumed silica, bentonite, fly ash, a fluid loss control additive, an expanding additive, a defoamer, a viscosifier, or a mixture thereof.

32. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of permitting the cement composition to remain in a slurry state for at least 24 hours.

33. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of permitting the cement composition to remain in a slurry state for at least two weeks.

34. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of permitting the cement composition to remain in a slurry state for more than two weeks.

35 (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the suspension properties of the cement composition are substantially uniform throughout the cement composition.

36. (Original) The method of claim 32 wherein the rheological properties of the cement composition remain substantially constant while the cement composition remains in a slurry state.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 wherein the yield stress reducing agent is selected from the group consisting of a sulfonated melamine formaldehyde condensate; a sulfonated napthalene condensate; and a sulfite adduct of an acetone formaldehyde condensate.

38. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cement composition has a density in the range of from about 4 pounds per gallon to about 25 pounds per gallon.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the cement composition further comprises water, and wherein the water is present in the cement composition in an amount in the range of from about 25% to about 150% by weight of the cement; wherein the set retarder is a phosphonic acid or phosphonic acid derivative; wherein the step of activating the cement composition comprises adding an activator composition to the cement composition; wherein the activator composition comprises a mixture of triethanolamine and an alkali metal hydroxide; wherein the particle-size distribution-adjusting agent is present in the cement composition in an amount in the range of from about 0.01 % to about 4 % by weight of the cement; wherein the particle-size distribution-adjusting agent is a cationic polymer.

40-122. (Canceled.)